



CITY OF HURON  
CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

September 22, 2023

Matthew Lasko, City Manager

## ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**ConAgra:** Based on recent Planning Commission approval of the conceptual site plan, the City held another meeting with the development team to talk through next steps. Ridgestone has engaged their own engineering firm to complete the necessary submittals to planning commission for plat review.

**Two Rivers:** The public hearing at City Council related to the Phase I PUD has been completed. At the next Council meeting on Tuesday July 11<sup>th</sup>, Council will consider the PUD request as well as the Development Agreement for Phase I. If approved, developers can move forward with plans to commence construction on the twenty-seven (27) homes comprising Phase I. Additional Phases of the project will require Planning Commission and Council approval.

**Norfolk Southern Holdings:** The City hosted Solomon Jackson from Norfolk Southern approximately a week ago to talk about their holdings and the future of the Carmuese Plant. Per Norfolk, the lease with Carmuese expires in early 2024 and neither party desires to renew it. As such, Carmuese continues to work on site cleanup as required by the lease. Upon vacation, Norfolk Southern will be working with the City to ultimately facilitate the sale and development of their waterfront acreage.

**Oster's:** The City continues to work diligently with our non-profit partners to continue relocation efforts for residents at the park. We believe approximately fourteen (15) households have physically relocated. Also, four (4) trailers have been moved to new locations for residents with three (3) more trailers remaining to be moved in the next few weeks – with one of those likely to occur this week weather permitting. In recent days, additional households have located housing to eventually move over the next couple weeks as well. As of today, we believe there are 3-4 households who are still in need of securing housing for their relocation.

Also, with the increasing number of vacant trailers existing on site, the City is planning to move forward with select demolition/removal of trailers owned by the City or Sellers in the very near future.

Legal counsel on both sides of the transaction is also considering a contract amendment to provide tenants with additional time if they are actively engaged in the relocation process and seeking assistance from the multiple social service agencies engaged in the project. If agreed upon, that amendment would need to come before the council for consideration.

**Residential Development:** It is our understanding that several sites in Huron and Huron Township are of interest to Triban Investment and their potential clients. During the week of July 31, we were updated that the company is working on several LOI's for potential land purchases. We will keep Council up to date and the identity of these site become known and the likelihood of development is better understood.

**Lakeway Manufacturing:** With a recent corporate acquisition completed, the City is in receipt of plans for the facility requesting approval of a major expansion. The company, set to present to the Planning Commission later this month, will be seeking approval of a nearly 11,000 square foot addition estimate at \$1.5M in value. We are appreciative of the company commitment to Huron and plans for future growth.

**Huron Chamber of Commerce:** The Huron Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has been in ongoing conversations to become an affiliate of the Greater Sandusky Partnership. Due to financial constraints at the Chamber, the Board has been exploring ways to ensure the long-term viability of the Chamber to ensure ongoing representation and advocacy for its members and the broader business community. At the Boars meeting in September, it was unanimously voted to allow GSP to begin drafting necessary documents to lay out a proposed framework for consolidation. The Board agrees this is a beneficial result to ensure the future operations of the Chamber and benefits to its members. I will keep the Council updated as these talks continue.

## INFRASTRUCTURE/STREETS/UTILITIES/IT

**Rt 6 Phase II:** Staff and Council hosted a second work session related to the second phase of Route 6. This work session aimed to finalize the preferred conceptual design of engineers and City staff as well as reviewing the possible options that were considered and will cover rough costs for certain options. Regardless of the preferred option, and final design decision will need to be approved by ODOT District 3 based on results of traffic studies and past precedence.

**Sawmill Parkway:** The final pour on the road was carried out last week. There will still be ROW work and punch list items to be completed. The new roadway looks great, and we would like to thank Smith Paving for being a great partner in such an important project.

A walkthrough was carried out with City Staff, OHM Project team and Smith Paving to create a final punch list. This final list was agreed upon and we hope that all points will be addressed by mid- October.

**East Side Sidewalks:** The City was notified by Governor DeWine's office on June 9<sup>th</sup> that the Ohio Department of Transportation awarded the City of Huron and Huron Township \$650,000 for the east side walk project. The funds were awarded through ODOT's Highway Safety Improvement

Program and were highly competitive since it was a statewide program. This award is in addition to the previously awarded \$120,000~ from Erie County.

We truly believe our multi-jurisdictional partnership and collaboration with Huron Township was instrumental in this award. A big thank you as well to Stu Hamilton and really OHM Advisors – as OHM Advisors prepared the application. This project is slated for 2024 construction.

The City has been granted the required easements to complete the segment of sidewalk on the northside of Rt6, between Gateway and Anchorage. We would like to thank our residents and Beachwood Cove HOA for working with the City to allow us to install this critical portion of the sidewalk. It is intended to bid this out at the same time as the main sidewalk project.

**Pavement Condition and 2023+ Resurfacing:** Based on recent conversations with OHM, we are anticipating being able to bid the comprehensive reconstruction and patching of the Old Homestead I and II and Chaska neighborhoods in either November or December of this year.

**Berlin Road Sidewalks:** The City continues to receive requests to consider sidewalk installation on Berlin Road – south of Shawnee School. We unsuccessfully applied for Safe Routes to School funding in 2022. And with the school ceasing to exist moving forward, this source of funding is not an option. The City will look to research other funding opportunities and placement of this project in a future capital planning year. We will also need to engage the railroad to determine what hurdles exist to install a pedestrian crossing over the rail tracks.

**Bike Lane Repainting:** This project went out to bid on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and closed May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023. We received two bidders, but unfortunately both were outside the 10% allowance of engineers estimate. Both bids were rejected. Staff will analyze why the delta between the estimate and bids were so wide.

**General:** Reminder, there will be a lot of utility work over the summer months, and we wanted to alert our Residents. We will have two fiber internet providers starting to install their fiber for their “Fiber To The Home” (FTTH) offering. This is a wonderful expansion of service providers for the city giving Residents not only choice, but also hopefully driving down the cost. The three companies are OmniFiber, Buckeye and Frontier.

We will also see our OHM partners throughout the city for the remainder of the year collecting our Stormwater asset inventory.

If you have any questions regarding ongoing Utility work in your neighborhood, please reach out to Stuart Hamilton at 419-433-5000 x1104 or email [stuart.hamilton@huronohio.us](mailto:stuart.hamilton@huronohio.us).

**Huron Public Power Third Transformer:** On January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, an RFP was released to purchase, deliver, ramp up and test this third 69kV transformer. The RFP closed, and we received a single respondent. We have issued a request for clarification on some technical details, and if these are answered satisfactorily, we will bring back legislation to award it to the Council soon. Legislation was presented to Council at the April 25th meeting for approval to purchase from Niagara Power Transformer. The bid price was \$1,039,837.00, with 100% due at time of receipt.

**Huron Public Power Expansion:** The City is getting close to bidding out our first expansion project for Huron Public Power. This project will allow Huron Public Power to be extended northward down Rye Beach Road, under the railroad tracks and across the entrance to Sawmill Parkway. By doing so, the City will be able to pick up additional customers along Sawmill Parkway on a case-by-case basis should property owners be interested in switching their power provider to Huron Public Power.

**Huron Public Power Rate Study:** Staff engaged Sawvel and Associates of Findlay, OH to carry out a rate study for HPP. This cost-of-service study will look at our distribution and capital costs, along with our revenue history and projections to ensure this utility is efficient and can keep expanding to serve other businesses and start serving residents.

**Shawnee School Zone:** Staff have removed all the school signage from Shawnee and submitted the required paperwork to ODOT. We will be storing these signs at the service complex in case they are needed for future projects. The flashing beacons will remain in their current place until relocated to the entrance of Bald Eagle Drive as part of the east side sidewalk project.

**Website:** A review committee comprising of four staff members was formed in the spring to review options for partners to replace our current website. The committee requested presentations for eight providers for a preliminary round review. Six vendors presented and the committee narrowed these options down to three for a deeper dive. In August, the final three carried out in-depth presentations and took question and answer sessions. After final voting, [Revize](#) of Troy, Michigan was selected. We will enter negotiations on modules and pricing and hope to return to Council for approval to move forward in early October.

Staff decided rather than to try and put this project out to bid, we would investigate multiple options and find the best fit for the job rather than the best response to an RFP. This is common for technology type projects as an RFP is not able to capture all the nuances needed, regardless of how well it is written. A robust vetting process of a solution and how each will fit our needs is more thorough and ultimately will return a more tailored solution.

## ZONING/CODE/PLANNING

**Coastal Management Assistance Grants:** On February 22, the City was notified of the results of our grant applications to the Office of Coastal Management of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. The City's request for capital dollars to help install a public pathway to the beach behind the water plant was denied. However, we did receive notification that our grant request for Showboat/Wall Street/Lakefront Park planning has been advanced in the process. The application has been sent to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for review to ensure compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act. Awards will be given in September/October.

Staff were informed that City was awarded the CMAG grant for the Lakefront Park trail design project. This grant award was in the amount of \$30,000.

**Main Street Corridor Plan:** Staff and OHM are currently revising the final plan to incorporate some of the final feedback received from the public at our recently held open house at the Boat Basin. We hope to present a final plan to the Planning Commission and Council in October.

**Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area:** As part of the main street/downtown plan – we heard from many folks about the desire to have a designated outdoor refreshment area, also referred to as a DORA, in Huron. DORA's are governed by the State of Ohio and have recently been approved in Sandusky, Milan, and Port Clinton. Staff has met internally to begin discussing the possibility of such an area within the City and begin to understand the potential safety and operational challenges of such a district. We are still very early on in the process and ultimately, if moving forward, will be subject to significant public and stakeholder feedback.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

**Tennis Courts:** The contractor continues work on this project. Last week contractors completed saw cutting and installation of under drains and commenced base repairs. This will be in advance of installing the coating that will take up to 30 days to cure. We are anticipating a late-September completion, weather permitting.

The surface has been installed, along with the topcoat. The fencing is expected to go up the week of the 25<sup>th</sup>. Once this is installed, the nets will be installed, final striping and the last topcoat will be applied. Final grading and restoration will follow. We are hoping for a mid-October completion.

**624 Berlin Road:** The City completed presentation of the final plan during a joint presentation to City Council and Planning Commission on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. The plan was very well received. The City is now currently looking for opportunities during the 2024 budgeting process to move some of the recommendations forward as early as next year including parking improvements, fishing piers, benches, and landscaping/plantings.

## FINANCE

**August Financial Report:** The August financial report is now completed and was sent to both finance committee and Council on September 15<sup>th</sup>. A link to the report is below:

<https://stories.opengov.com/huronoh/published/N8yy9fnbW>

**2024 Budget:** The Finance Department has completed multiple meetings with all departments to review draft budgets and capital requests for 2024. Over the next few weeks, Finance and the City Manager will be finalizing the recommended budget for the Finance Committee. The first budget meeting begins on October 23<sup>rd</sup> in the Council Chambers at 4 PM.

## WATER DEPARTMENT

### Recent Activity:

- The city received a \$10,000 equipment grant from the Ohio EPA which will go towards the purchase of a hydraulic power pack and hydraulic valve turner.
- Staff are collecting quotes for damage done to the 12' main (150 ft) on Sawmill Parkway after a semi-truck hit a hydrant. The supply loop is currently valved off, but all customers still have service. We have only managed to have one company respond with quotes for repairs on this project. At this point we need to move ahead with repairing the watermain. The approximate cost for all the damage will be ~\$115,000. The party responsible has to this date agreed to pay for any damage. Work on this repair will start on 9/11/2023.

This work was completed the week of the 18<sup>th</sup> and we now have full-service loops on Sawmill Parkway again.

- Smith Paving completed work removing the north sludge retention dike (approx. 100 tons) at the filtration plant.

### Active Project Updates:

**Alternate Intake/Sludge Lagoon:** A proposal was received from Kleinfelder to undertake the design for this project. Clarifications were returned to them recently and staff are waiting for an updated proposal.

**West Side Water Tower:** On June 16<sup>th</sup>, The City was awarded \$5M from Governor DeWine's Ohio BUILDS water and wastewater infrastructure grant program. This is the largest allowable grant in the State of Ohio, and we believe it to be the largest single grant the City of Huron has ever received. We are thankful to our State and Local partners that help make projects like this possible.

**South Main Street Water Line Replacement:** Based on recent conversations with OHM, we are anticipating being able to bid this project in November or December of this year which will also include the complete resurfacing and select curb replacement of Forest Hills Drive, Hickory Road, and Valleyview Drive. The City has also been asked to consider, as part of this project, installing a crosswalk at Valleyview Drive to connect to the sidewalks on the east side of Main Street. We will be exploring the feasibility of this in the upcoming weeks.

### PERSONNEL/ADMINISTRATION

**Maintenance Worker I (Streets) Position Filled:** Staff interviewed several applicants for the recently vacated Maintenance I position in the Streets Department, resulting in the hiring of our preferred candidate, Troy Halstead. Troy is a Huron resident with more than 15 years of relevant experience, and we are excited to have him join our team. Troy's first day will be September 18<sup>th</sup> at a starting hourly rate of \$21.14 per the AFSCME CBA Agreement.

### AGREEMENTS

**Geo-Gradel Addendum to License Agreement:** Geo.Gradel Co., who is performing dredging work for the US Geological Service, has completed their additional dredging, and has removed all equipment from the ConAgra site.



## CONTRACTS

- Bricker & Eckler – HPP Legal Services (Law) – **Expires 9/30/23.**
- OHM Advisors (Engineering) – **Expires 12/31/23.**
- HJRD Annual Agreement (Recreation) - **Expires 12/31/23.**
- Dispatch Agreement – Erie County Sheriff – **Expires 12/31/23.**
- City Prosecutor Employment Agreement – expires **12/31/23.**
- Personnel Officer Employment Agreement – expires **12/31/23.**
- Erie Soil and Water Conservation District (Engineering) – **Expires 1/31/24.**
- Seeley, Savidge, Ebert & Gourash Co., LLP (Law) – **Expires 6/3/24.**
- Dynegy Electric Aggregation Agreement – expires **7/30/25.**
- Dynegy Electric Standard Large Stable Service Agreement – expires **08/2025**
- School Resource Officer – **Expires 8/31/26.**
- Republic Services – **Expires 12/31/26.**

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### September Meetings:

- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 in the Council Chambers.

### October Meetings:

- HJRD – Tuesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers.
- Utilities Committee Meeting – Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 in the main conference room.
- BZA Meeting – Monday, October 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm in the Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 in the Council Chambers.
- Planning Commission Meeting – Wednesday, October 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 in the Council Chambers.
- Finance Committee Budget Meeting – Monday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4:00pm in the Council Chambers.
- City Council Meeting – Tuesday, October 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 in the Council Chambers.
- Records Commission – Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am in the main conference room.
- Finance Committee Budget Meeting – Monday, October 30<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm in the Council Chambers.